

BEST INTERESTS RECOMMENDATIONS: A LAWYER-GUARDIAN AD LITEM'S ROAD MAP FOR HOW TO GET THERE

August 14, 2013

**Hall of Justice
925 West Ottawa
Lansing, Michigan 48915**



**Sponsored by:
State Court Administrative Office
Child Welfare Services Division
and
Governor's Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect**

This project was funded by a federal Children's Justice Act grant to the Governor's Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect administered through the Michigan Department of Human Services, under the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, Administration of Children and Families, Department of Health and Human Services, CFDA 93.643, being sections 107(a), (b), (c), (d), (e), and (f) as amended (42 USC 5101 *et seq.*); and the Victims of Crime Act of 1984, as amended (42 USC 10601 *et seq.*). In addition, this is a joint project of the State Court Administrative Office and the Governor's Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect, chaired by the Honorable Kenneth Tacoma, Chief Judge of the Wexford County Probate Court.

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

In a child welfare case, the lawyer-guardian ad litem (LGAL) has the critical role of advocating for the child's best interests. This training will explore the components that should be included in an evaluation of a child's best interests and provide strategies to help the LGAL make well-informed recommendations in every child welfare case. Topics will include: what a LGAL should know about childhood trauma; how to conduct a thorough investigation; how to make client visits meaningful; and preparing child clients for court proceedings. Participants will leave the training with strategies for providing exemplary representation, while fulfilling their statutory duties.

TARGET AUDIENCE

This training is open to all lawyer-guardians ad litem.

AGENDA

9:15-9:45 a.m.	Registration
9:45-10:15 a.m.	A Judicial Perspective on What Makes a Good Best Interest Recommendation <i>Speaker: TBD</i>
10:15-11:00 a.m.	Incorporating Relatives into the Best Interest Analysis <i>Margaret E. Allen, Attorney at Law, Rockford, Michigan</i>
11:00-11:15 a.m.	Break
11:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m.	Navigating Difficulties Inherent in LGAL Representation to Achieve Best Representation Possible <i>Jan A. Miner, Attorney, Bay County Department of Public Defender</i>
12:15-1:00 p.m.	Lunch
1:00-2:15 p.m.	Trauma Informed Practice for Advocates and Decision-Makers <i>Dr. James A. Henry, Ph.D., Professor, Western Michigan University; and Program Director, Children's Trauma Assessment Center, Western Michigan University</i> <i>Dr. Mark Sloane, DO, Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrician, Center for Behavioral Pediatrics; and Medical Director, Children's Trauma Assessment Center, Western Michigan University</i> <i>Frank Vandervort, Clinical Professor of Law, Attorney, University of Michigan Law School</i>
2:15-2:30 p.m.	Break
2:30-3:30 p.m.	Trauma Informed Practice for Advocates and Decision-Makers (cont.)
3:30 p.m.	Closing Comments

TRAINING COSTS

THERE IS NO REGISTRATION FEE FOR THIS TRAINING. The training is generously funded by the Governor's Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect. Training materials and a lunch will be provided. **Travel, meals other than lunch, and lodging expenses are the responsibility of the participant.**

Registration is on a first-come, first-served basis. However, there may be some exceptions to ensure geographic diversity and participation across professions. *Due to space limitations, restrictions have been placed on the number of individuals per agency and discipline who may attend this training. Registration will not guarantee attendance.*

A confirmation notice will be sent to you approximately two weeks before the training. If you have not received a confirmation by August 1, 2013, contact Heather Leidi at 517-373-5322 or LeidiH@courts.mi.gov.

LODGING INFORMATION

A limited block of overnight rooms has been reserved at the Country Inn & Suites for August 13, 2013, at a rate of \$75 per night for single-occupancy lodging. This block of rooms will be released back to the hotel after August 1, 2013, so please make your reservation early. We cannot guarantee these rates after the August 1 deadline. Please note: You are responsible for your lodging expenses.

Country Inn & Suites: To make your reservations at the Country Inn & Suites call 517-827-7000 and reference “**Child Welfare Services**” to ensure that you receive the reduced rate. Country Inn & Suites is located at 6511 Centurion Drive, Lansing, Michigan, 48917. Directions can be found at the following websites:

Site Map: <http://www.countryinns.com>

MapQuest: www.mapquest.com

TRAINING REGISTRATION

Online Registration: [Click here](#)

OR

Follow the steps below:

- 1) Go to the Child Welfare Services webpage:
<http://www.courts.michigan.gov/administration/scao/officesprograms/cws/childwelfareservicest raining/pages/default.aspx>
- 2) Select: “**CWS Programs**”
- 3) Select: “**Schedule of Upcoming Programs**”
- 4) Select: “**Best Interests Recommendations: A lawyer-guardian ad litem’s road map for how to get there**”
- 5) Select: “**Register**” and complete the form

Please use **Internet Explorer** as your browser when registering for this training. If you have problems registering, please contact Heather Leidi at LeidiH@courts.mi.gov or 517-373-5322.

You should submit your registration as soon as possible to increase the likelihood that your registration will be confirmed. Your registration is a commitment to attend the entire portion of the training for which you register. Please do not register to attend this training unless you have scheduling flexibility and have received the necessary authorization to attend.

If you need to cancel after you have been confirmed to attend this training, please contact Heather Leidi at LeidiH@courts.mi.gov or 517-373-5322 as soon as possible so that appropriate arrangements can be made.